

Crazy Ant Strike Team Crew Leader CAST XI Expedition to Johnston Atoll

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit are now accepting applications for the crew leader of the 11th Crazy Ant Strike Team (CAST XI) Expedition to Johnston Atoll National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Johnston Atoll NWR is located in the central Pacific Ocean, 717 nautical miles west-southwest of Honolulu. The atoll comprises four small islands (696 acres), which constitute the only land area in over 750,000 square miles of ocean. The refuge is uninhabited except for the 5 members of the strike team.

In January 2010, an infestation of Yellow Crazy Ants (YCA), *Anoplolepis gracilipes*, was found affecting approximately 130 acres of the 630-acre Johnston Island. Local impacts to wildlife already observed on Johnston Island include the apparent desertion of the entire affected area by ground nesting birds (Red-tailed Tropicbird and Wedge-tailed Shearwater) that previously occupied those areas and a possible reduction in density and numbers of tree-nesting bird species (Red-footed Booby and White Tern) inside the area colonized by YCA. The potential for even greater impacts to the terrestrial ecosystem at Johnston Atoll is substantial if the infestation of YCA is left unchecked.

Efforts have been ongoing since August 2010; YCA numbers have been reduced by 99% and the seabirds have begun to return. A crew leader is being sought to lead a team of volunteers to continue the eradication effort and destroy the last 1% of the ants remaining on the island, monitor the returning seabird populations, and conduct other management activities.

Candidates for the Crew Leader position will ideally be available to start work in Honolulu, HI on October 5th 2015. Housing will be provided for the approximately two months that will be spent in Honolulu where the crew leader will act as the office liaison for the crew currently stationed on Johnston and will assist with extensive trip preparations followed by an approximate 6-month deployment to the CAST field camp at Johnston Island starting in early December 2015. End date of the position is not yet determined but it is anticipated to be in late June with the potential option to extend it if work is needed in Honolulu after the expedition.

Duties: The crew leader will be responsible for training and supervising a crew of 4 volunteers in the performance of management activities that include:

- The implementation of established protocols to monitor ants, seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and marine reef ecosystems.
- Camp and facilities maintenance including servicing of solar systems, generator and UTV's
- Supervise the preparation and application of pesticide baits.
- Evaluate the ecological impacts of YCA within and outside the infested area before and after ant eradication efforts.
- Submit weekly situation reports to project managers.
- Submit to project managers a final summary report.
- Train and supervise volunteers in all skills and techniques necessary in the performance of biological field work and remote living.

Requirements:

- Must be available from 5-Oct-2015 through late June 2016
- Must possess a bachelor's or higher degree in a biological science or other natural resource management related field.
- Must have at least 24 months of biological field work experience.
- Must have 12-24 months of supervisory experience and be able to provide work direction and guidance to volunteers.
- Must be an excellent communicator.
- Must be comfortable with the use of pesticides.
- Must have the ability to maintain facilities such as photovoltaic systems, generators propane appliances, utility vehicles and bicycles.
- Must be able to follow established protocols.
- Must be physically fit and able to walk 10 miles a day, lift and carry 70 lbs, ride a bicycle, swim and be able to perform repetitive stooping and bending motions.
- Must be willing and able to work 48 hours per week/ 6 days per week.
- Must possess a valid driver's license that does not expire before September 2016.
- Must possess a valid passport that does not expire before September 2016.
- Must have experience with GIS tools and ArcGIS software.
- Must be proficient in the use of MS Excel and Word programs.
- Must possess American Red Cross First Aid/CPR certification (within 3 months of hire).

The ideal candidate will also:

- Possess a graduate degree.
- Have at least 6 years or more of extensive biological field experience.
- Have extensive experience in remote camping and living,
- Have experience with pesticide applications, integrated pest management plans, and possess pesticide application certifications.
- Be proficient with GIS systems.
- Have experience and training with advanced wilderness first aid.
- Have basic or advanced knowledge and skills in carpentry, electrical repair, and small engine systems and repairs.
- Have prior experience with seabird and shorebird identification.
- Have prior entomological survey and identification experience, especially with ants.
- Be proficient in technical report writing.

It is imperative that candidates consider that Johnston is a remote site where all but emergency access is by ship, which takes 3-5 days to transit from Honolulu. No re-supply or ship visits during the 6-month camp are anticipated. On the island, transportation will primarily be by foot or bicycle with 1-mile daily commutes to the work site. Living conditions are primitive and consist of 12'x14'x6' personal sleeping tents while a bunker is used for communal/food storage/kitchen and office areas. Weather conditions can be harsh with strong winds, tropical storms, and hot sun. Bathing and washing is done in the ocean. Communication with the island has proven to be reliable but primarily slow satellite internet access. However, this internet access cannot be guaranteed and team members must be prepared in case communications

become limited to text only e-mail with no internet browsing capability. Direct medical attention is at minimum 1-3 days away. Safety in this remote setting is of primary concern and all individuals are expected to work together as a team to maintain good communication at all times.

Salary:

Salary will be ~\$900/week while deployed on Johnston Island and ~\$750/week while in Honolulu. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will provide: housing in Honolulu (pre-deployment staging and post camp breakdown and debrief), transportation between Honolulu and Johnston, and food and housing on Johnston.

The position will be open until filled but interviews will begin as early as July 20th, 2015.

Submit a cover letter, resume, and at least 3 references to both:

Amanda_Pollock@fws.gov

and

Kevin_donmoyer@fws.gov